



Florida's Cattle Industry

Though unnoticed today in the midst of so many tourist attractions and rapidly growing communities, Florida's landscape was once a vast area of grazing lands. For almost 500 years, the cattle industry has contributed significantly to Florida's economy and natural resources. Multi-generational family ranches have cared for the land, provided employment for many residents and contributed greatly to the local tax base.

Florida cattle producers are good "stewards of the land" as owners and caretakers of thousands of acres of pristine native range and pasture land. In recognition of their conservation efforts, Florida has had several regional winners and one national winner of the National Cattlemen's Environmental Stewardship Award. Lands used for cattle production are also important "green space" for wildlife and native plant habitat, aquifer recharge and carbon recovery. Grass and forages used for cattle production are renewable resources occurring in a great variety of landscapes typically found on



cattle ranches, including improved pastures, wetlands and marsh, woodlands and prairie. Biologists conclude that bird and wildlife populations thrive

on lands used for cattle production. Florida's cattle industry was a leader in the formulation and adoption of agricultural industry Water Quality Best Management Practices and other standards.

Florida is a cow-calf state. The primary cattle "crop" is calves which are shipped to other states to be finished and processed into beef. Florida beef producers own over one million cows, heifers and bulls generating a calf "crop" which exceeds 800,000 calves annually. With a total breeding herd value of over \$847 million and an annual calf crop estimated at over \$400 million, Florida's beef cattle herd is valued in excess of a billion dollars. Beef cattle sales and sales of breeding stock generate a total economic impact of over \$900 million annually.

Florida seedstock producers consistently supply "building blocks" for commercial herds around the world. Florida breeders have made great strides with superior genetic traits which have been selected for adaptation to Florida's subtropical climate allowing the industry to compete effectively in national and global markets.

Florida's dairies supply milk and dairy products which are mostly consumed in-state, creating cash receipts in excess of \$400 million. Florida is home to over 100,000 dairy cows which produce over 2 billion pounds of raw milk annually.



Interesting Facts

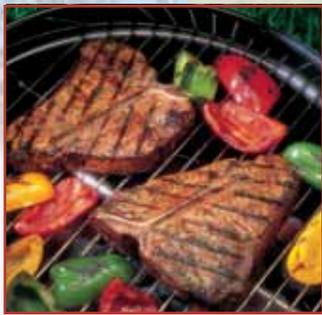
- Cattle were first introduced to North America in Florida in 1521 by Spanish explorer Juan Ponce de Leon.
- The largest single brood cow herd in the US is located in Florida.
- Florida is home to five of the top ten largest Cow/Calf operations in the US (2009).
- Florida was ranked 10th in the nation in number of beef cows in 2011.
- Nearly one-half of all Florida Agricultural land is involved in cattle production.
- Florida has 3.2 million acres of pastureland and 1.3 million acres of grazed woodland (2007).
- Much of "Natural Florida" remains in the working landscape of Florida's cattle industry.
- Wildlife and native plant system populations thrive on Florida's ranchlands.
- Healthy "green spaces" filter and recharge underground water supplies.

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Quality Assurance

Florida's cattle producers continue to work diligently to provide the public with safe, healthy products from a wholesome, natural environment. Beef Quality Assurance is a daily component of livestock management programs. Animal identification leads to better health records, tracking and monitoring for effective disease detection and eradication. Ranchers work cooperatively with the USDA, Animal Plant Health Inspection Service and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to protect animal health and public safety.



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To Learn More Contact:

Florida Cattlemen's Association

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www.floridacattlemen.org



For general information or have a local cattle producer speak to your organization.

Florida Association of Livestock Markets

P.O. Box 421929
Kissimmee, Florida 34742
(407) 846-4557



To find a market in your area.

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Animal Industry

407 South Calhoun Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399
(850) 410-0900 or FreshFromFlorida.com/ai
For assistance with animal health programs
(850) 617-7341 *For assistance with livestock marketing programs*



FreshFromFlorida.com

FloridaCattlemen.org

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Florida Department of
Agriculture and Consumer Services

Adam H. Putnam, Commissioner